

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-8, 10, 11, 13-15, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Price, U.S. Patent Application Number 2002/0158098.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Groover, U.S. Patent Number 6,257,942.

Claims 2, 3, 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Groover.

Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Price in view of Green et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,934,484.

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Price in view of Dowe, Sr., U.S. Patent No. 6,382,352.

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections and submits that none of the cited references teach all of the claimed elements of the present invention. Namely, the cited references fail to teach or suggest an **attachment means that includes a retaining strap 7 and a belt strap 13**, as recited in independent claim 1. Also none of the cited references teach or suggest a **means for attaching the means for storing the means that couples the firefighter with the hose line or main search rope onto a firefighter's equipment comprising a retaining strap**, as recited in claim 10.

Independent claim 1 recites a device for conducting reconnoiter and rescue operations that includes an attachment means comprised of both a retaining strap and a belt strap. Independent claim 10 also recites a retaining strap.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither loop 16 nor belt 12 of Price is analogous to applicants claimed retaining strap or belt strap. None of the other cited prior art references teach or suggest both of these claimed features.

The instant invention includes both a retaining strap and a belt strap that allows a user to attach the instant invention to any strap on a breathing apparatus or its frame. Some of these attachment points may include a waist belt, upper shoulder strap, lower shoulder strap, high-pressure hoses or metal frame. This is achieved because the Velcro or other fastening means are included on the retaining and belt straps. See Figures 3 and 4 of the instant invention. The other cited references, namely Price, includes a fixed belt loop 16, that only allows them to be worn on a belt 12 that may be decoupled to allow the Price device to be fixed onto the belt 12. Price cannot be easily affixed to all of the above-mentioned attachment points. The novel arrangement of both a retaining strap and belt strap of the instant invention renders it extremely more versatile to all users.

The streamline size and shape of the instant invention allows users to wear the device on the upper shoulder strap for ease in accessing the device. This reduces the possibility of the device becoming an entanglement hazard. Moreover, the belt strap runs substantially the length of the bag to retain the

device in place during execution of firefighting operations. Thus, the device does not move around whenever it is attached to the firefighter. The Price device dangles from belt 12 as shown in the figures.

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that each of the pending claims as submitted herein recites subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited prior art. Namely, none of the cited prior art discloses or suggests a **retaining strap and belt strap**, as recited in claim 1. None of the cited prior art recites a **means for attaching the means for storing the means that couples the firefighter with the hose line or main search rope onto a firefighter's equipment comprising a retaining strap**, as recited in claim 10. Thus, applicant respectfully submits that any combination of the cited prior art neither teaches nor suggests all of the features recited in these claims.

The applicant respectfully traverses rejections of the pending claims as being unpatentable and submits that none of the references either singly or in combination teaches or suggests all of the claimed features of the present invention. Further, applicant strongly submits that the subject matter which distinguishes the present invention from the cited prior art is more than sufficient to render the claimed invention unobvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that claims all of the pending claims be found allowable, and this application be passed to issue.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not currently in condition for allowance, that the Examiner contact by telephone, the applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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